

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2860
By: Guerra
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The House Public Health Committee interim report to the 88th Legislature recommended funding border and frontier health care loan and tuition reimbursements to address health care professional shortages in border communities. The report indicated that the ratio of nurse practitioners in the Rio Grande Valley to population is more than 40 percent lower than the Texas average. H.B. 2860 seeks to address these issues by providing for a tuition reimbursement and student loan repayment program for health care professionals in border communities.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2860 requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in consultation with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, to develop and adopt a plan to establish new and improve existing tuition reimbursement programs and programs aiding with the repayment of student loans for eligible health care professionals who are serving in communities near and along the Texas-Mexico border. The bill requires the plan to do the following:

- require a health care professional to commit to full-time employment in those communities for a specified time to be eligible for participation in the programs; and
- give preference for program participation to health care professionals who live in those communities.

The bill requires DSHS, not later than September 1, 2026, to submit to the legislature the plan and the estimated cost to the state of implementing the plan. The bill's provision expires January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.